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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/738,292	12/18/2000	Christopher Thompson	9-13528-142US	2141

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EXAMINER

HALIM, SAHERA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2157

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/738,292	Applicant(s) THOMPSON ET AL.	
	Examiner Sahera Halim	Art Unit 2157	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 May 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-8, 10-15, 19-21 and 23-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-8, 10-15, 19-21 and 23-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to communication filed on May 5, 2006.
2. Claims 2-8, 10-15, and 19-35 are pending.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 35 is objected to because of the following informalities: It is unknown what VTE stands for in claim 35. The examiner requests that "Virtual Team Environment" be entered before VTE. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2-8, 10-15, 19-21, and 23-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,793,365 to Tang et al. (hereinafter Tang) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,363,140 to Pinard (hereinafter Pinard).

6. Regarding claim 35, Tang teaches in a persistent collaboration services suite for facilitating collaboration between members of a team, a method of enabling a team member to control communications with other members of the team, the method comprising steps of (col. 12, lines 9-39 and abstract, Tang teaches communication between the workers of a workgroup):

enabling the team member to interact with the persistent collaboration services suit to (abstract and col. 12, line 17 –60): define member profile comprising communication information defining a respective set of preferences of the team member for participating in each one of a plurality of different types of communications (col. 8, lines 3-28, Tang teaches selection of communication mechanism is based on user performances) and forwarding the communication information to a respective VTE of each one of the other members of the team (see Fig 11 and col. 12. lines 2 –66).

Although the system disclosed by Tang shows substantial features of the claimed invention, it fails to disclose defining a plurality of member profiles and selecting one of the plurality of member profiles as a current profile. However, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Pinard. In an analogous art, discloses defining a plurality of member profiles and selecting one of the plurality of member profiles as a current profile (See abstract and Figs 2 and 3 and col.2, line 42 – col. 3, line 67). Given the teachings of Pinard and Tang, a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Tang and Pinard in order to suit the user's particular situation (col. 2, line 15 – 22).

7. As to claim 2, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the types of communications comprise: 1-way messaging (error message, col. 14 lines 46-52), 2-way messaging voice, and multi-media (col. 13 lines 1-12, col. 14 lines 18).

8. As to claim 3, Tang teaches inherently a method as claimed in claim 2, wherein 1-way messaging comprises one or more of paging because Tang's operating environment uses video, audio, microphone, email, and the like in communications between team members (col. 13 lines 5-12, col. 14 lines 15-18, and figs. 3, 5-6, and 8), therefore, users can setup the email to page them whenever new messages or important news arrive to their personal devices such as: PDAS, cellular phones, pagers, or the like.

9. As to claim 4, Tang teaches a method member as claimed in claim 2, wherein 2-way messaging comprises instant messaging (error message, col. 14 lines 46-50, reflect status, col. 5 lines 59-61).

10. As to claim 5, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 2, wherein multi-media communication comprises one or more of: document sharing, and application sharing (col. 3 lines 59-67).

11. Per claim 6, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the communications information comprises, for each one of the plurality of different types of communications, a selected one of (col. 8, lines 3-28):
an indication that the team member prefers not to participate in the respective type of communications; and communications preference information identifying a preferred

communications device selected by the team member for participating in the respective type of communications (col. 8, lines 3-28).

12. Regarding claim 7, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the communications preference information comprises at least an address of the preferred communications device (col. 8, lines 3-28).

13. Per claim 8, Tang discloses a method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the address comprises any one or more of: a public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) destination number (DN); a Private Branch Exchange (PBX) extension number; an internet protocol (IP) address; and an e-mail address (col. 8, lines 3-28).

14. Reference to claim 10, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 35, wherein each team member profile is associated with a respective one of a plurality of different roles of the team member (col. 12, lines 9 – 39 and col. 7, lines 29 - 61).

15. Regarding claim 11, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 10, wherein each one of the plurality of different roles is defined by the respective team member (col. 12, lines 9 – 39 and col. 7, lines 29 - 61).

16. Per claim 12, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the plurality of different roles comprises a working role of the team member (col. 12, lines 9 – 39 and col. 7, lines 29 - 61).

17. Reference to claim 13, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 10, wherein each team member profile is further associated with a respective one of a plurality of different environments of the team member (Col. 5, lines 13 – col. 6, line 62).

18. Per claim 14, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 13, wherein each one of the plurality of different environments is defined by the respective team member (Col. 5, lines 13 – col. 6, line 62).

19. Regarding claim 15, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the plurality of different environments comprises an office environment of the team member (Col. 5, lines 13 – col. 6, line 62).

20. Reference to claim 19, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 18, wherein enabling the team member to interact with the persistent collaboration services suit comprises the step of: providing an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) interface to the persistent virtual team environment; and enabling the team member to access the IVR using a voice communication device (col. 14, lines 15-58).

1. Regarding claim 24, Tang, teaches a method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the step of enabling the team member to interact with the persistent collaboration services suit comprises the steps of (summary): providing a graphical user interface (GUI) adapted to interact with the persistent collaboration services suit (col. 14, lines 15 – 58)); and enabling the team member to access the graphical interface using a GUI-enabled communications device (See figs. 1A-B, 2 3, 7 and 8 and col. 3, lines 32 – col. 4, line 28).

2. Regarding claim 25, Tang discloses a method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the GUI is instantiated in the GUI-enabled communications device and adapted to interact with the collaboration services suite through a network (Figs. 10 –11).

3. Reference to claim 26, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the GUI is instantiated by a web page associated with the collaborations services suite and accessible by the GUI-enabled communications device through an IP network (Figs. 10 –11 and col. 11, lines 38- 40).

4. Regarding claim 27, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the GUI-enabled communications device comprises any one of: a PC; a wireless PDA, a Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) enabled communications devices (col. 11, line 4 – col. 22 and col. 13, line 1-12 and Figs. 1A-B, 8).

5. As to claim 28, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 24, wherein enabling the team member to interact with the persistent collaboration services suite further comprises the steps of: using the GUI to display information of one or more options concerning the communications information; receiving an input from the team member indicative of a team member selection; and selecting the communications information using the team member selections (col. 14, lines 14 – 58 and col.12 line 3 – col. 13, line 12).

6. Per claim 29, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the information of one or more options comprises information identifying each one of a plurality team member profile, each team member profile including respective different communications information (col. 5, lines 12 – col. 6, line 62).

7. Reference to claim 31, Tang discloses a method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the information of one or more options comprises information identifying an availability of the team member for participating in each one of the plurality of different types of communications (col. 5, lines 12 – col. 6, line 62).

8. As to claim 32, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 31, wherein the step of selecting the communications information comprises, in respect of each one of the plurality of different types of communications, a step of using the input form the team member to select one of: and indication that the team member is prefers not to

participate in the respective type of communications; and information identifying a preferred communications device selected by the team member for participating in the respective type of communications (col. 5, lines 12 – col. 6, line 62).

9. Regarding claim 33, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the information identifying a preferred communications device comprises at least an address of the preferred communications device (col. 8, lines 3 - 28).

10. As to claim 34, Tang discloses a team member profile as claimed in claim 33, wherein the address comprises any one or more of: a Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) destination number (DN); a Private Branch Exchanged (PBX) extension number; an internet protocol (IP) address; and an e-mail address ((col. 8, lines 3 - 28).

21. Claims 20 – 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang in view of Pinard as applied to the claims above, and further in view of Parsons et al, US Pub. No. 2002/0085701 (hereinafter Parsons).

11. Regarding claim 20, Tang and Pinard do not explicitly teach wherein enabling the team member interact with the persistent collaboration services suite further comprises the steps of: playing an announcement including information of more options concerning communications information; receiving one more dialed digits dialed by

team member in response to the announcement; and selecting the communications information using the received dialed digits.

However, Parsons teaches wherein enabling the team member interact with the persistent collaboration services suite further comprises the steps of: playing an announcement including information of more options concerning communications information (pg. 8, 0087); receiving one more dialed digits dialed by team member in response to the announcement; and selecting the communications information using the received dialed digits (pg. 8, 0088 –0090). Having the teachings of Tang, Pinard and Parsons, it would have been obvious for a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Tang and Parsons in order to provide communications and messaging services to employees or workgroups through alternative and variably available devices (page1, 0007).

12. Reference to claim 21, Tang teaches wherein the information of one more options comprises information identifying each one plurality of team member profiles.

13. As to claim 23, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the step of selecting communications information comprises a step of using the dialed digits dialed by team member select one plurality of team member profiles as a current profile (col. 5, line 12 – col. 6, line 65).

Response to Arguments

22. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 35 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

23. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,108,540 to Sonti et al. (this invention deals with storing multiple profiles of all subscribers within its serving region)

U.S. Pat. No. 6,449,632 to David et al. (this invention discloses multiplicity of user profiles collected by user profile agents and integrating user profiles)

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sahera Halim whose telephone number is (571) 272-4003. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays and Thursday from 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2157

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sahera Halim
Patent Examiner
AU: 2157

June 15, 2006


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